



FRIENDS' CENTRAL SCHOOL

December 8, 2017

Dear Families,

As we enter the last month of 2017, I am grateful for all of the learning moments and intentional community-building that have been part of my new role as Coordinator of Equity and Justice Education. Through collaboration with faculty, staff, students, and parents, I can already feel the ways my new role will help Friends' Central live out its mission and vision, and I hope that the members of the FCS community feel the same.

In the Lower School, I have been excited to connect with teachers to help support different projects and lessons in their classrooms. These opportunities to get to know the Lower School faculty and curriculum better have included time with Sharon Kollender (grade 2) teaching students about the cajon, an Afro-Peruvian percussion instrument; joining 4B to talk about my life as a musician and creating music with the class. I will be joining the Nursery B class this week to talk about holiday traditions and plan on connecting with additional classrooms throughout the rest of the year. I have also had the pleasure of co-clerking the Lower School Diversity Committee with Deb Will, supporting the work of teachers as we all craft affirming and enriching experiences for the youngest members of our school community.

In the Middle School, I have enjoyed supporting Keino Terrell and Lauren Davis in their service group "Students of Culture," a group charged with planning assemblies and leading affinity groups in the Middle School. Along with Pdraig Barry, I will serve as faculty advisor for the boys' group during the first session of affinity groups. In collaboration with Robyn Richmond, our Quaker Coordinator, I will be teaching a one-week social justice course to grade six students, exploring identity and themes in social justice and how they are connected to Quakerism. I have also been a member of the Middle School Diversity Committee and will be supporting the upcoming Diversity Days in the Middle School.

In the Upper School, Assistant Head of School Mariama Richards and I have led two assemblies for the entire Upper School as we work to develop a common language and understanding of social justice terms. We revisited ground rules for engaging in dialogue that were brought to us by the Dialogue Institute from Temple University last year, and we have explored the big eight cultural identifiers (ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation) and the ways these identifiers influence how we understand ourselves and those around us. Building on the program that exist in our Middle School, we've recently launched an optional affinity group

program for students that will focus on race and developing positive racial identities for students in grades 9-12. These affinity groups, led by teachers who have all gone through training, will be meeting for the first time in January, with at least four additional meetings of individual and cross-racial groups meeting before the end of year.

I have also been working with the Parents for Diversity group, which is tri-clerked by Alessandro Condif, Timika Lane, and Lisa Mathewson, to provide information and support programming ideas that come directly from you, our parent body. If you have any questions about how to get involved, feel free to email me at ddunston@friendscentral.org.

Thank you for your support, and I look forward to communicating with you more on Friends' Central's Diversity and Social Justice efforts later in the year.

Warmly,
Dwight Dunston '06
Coordinator of Equity and Justice Education